

Want to See Life as a Perpetual Victim? There's an App for That!!

It's a common conundrum at the end of a meal at a restaurant: How to split the bill fairly? Rather than using that boring process of figuring out who ordered and ate what, [a new app called "Equipay"](#) divides the bill based on group members' demographic characteristics and the presumed wage gap that they suffer while working. Under the banner of fairness, the App sticks white guys with more of the bill, while women and members of minority groups get a price cut. Equipay creator and comedian Luna Malbroux calls it "reparations one meal at a time."

The App may have started as a joke, but the mentality behind it is no laughing matter. Americans, particularly women, are constantly encouraged to see themselves as victims of an unfair society who deserve restitution. The "78-cents-on-the-dollar" mantra is pushed on women as evidence that they are all doomed victims of rampant discrimination in our overwhelmingly sexist society.

That's hardly empowering. It also just isn't what the data shows. The wage gap statistic fueling these claims and Apps like Equipay simply compares the earnings of the average working man and the average working woman. It doesn't take into account the number of hours worked, industry, workplace conditions, years of work, and the many other factors that impact how much someone earns.

In fact, men could make their own grievance-based Apps using some of the data that's left out of the infamous wage gap statistic. The average full-time working man works [40 minutes more each day](#) than the average full-time working women. That's

an 8 percent gap in work time, which alone explains a good chunk of the infamous gap in salary. Male workers also spend 23 percent more [time commuting](#) than female workers do. Why do they sacrifice more of their lives in traffics and crowded trains? Presumably, it's so they can earn more money. Men also suffer [92 percent](#) of fatal work injuries. Is it really so surprising that men are paid more when they take on such significant extra risks?

Some brave champion of fairness could create Apps to balance out the extra woes working men shoulder. One could monitor women's driving, and require that they drive an extra dozen miles each day in penance for men's longer commute. An App could tally up the lost life hours of all those men killed on the job and divide that time among women, and require them all to wear hair shirts in recognition of the pain these men suffered. Of course, this would be worse than useless: Men wouldn't be made any happier or better off because women are more miserable.

It's time to recognize that seeing the world through the grievance-colored glasses debilitates those who put them on. Rather than being encouraged to assume workplaces are all overwhelmingly sexist and they are doomed to earn 78-cents-on-the-dollar, women would be far better served by recognizing that the most important factors determining how much they earn are the choices they make about what to study while in school, what field to enter, and how much time they want to dedicate to their careers. This doesn't mean that women never run into discrimination. Even after relevant factors like industry, hours, and education are taken into account, a few percentage-points separates men and women's earnings. Certainly, some of that may be attributable to discrimination. But that's a very different picture than the one painted by those in the grievance-promotion industry.

Women shouldn't let the specter of discrimination obscure how much control they have over their destinies and the

opportunities that are before them. They aren't doomed to be a statistic and to earn less than the men they are eating dinner with! That presumption, which is really what underpins the Equipay App, is profoundly insulting to women as well as to others given a price cut based on their color or racial background. And there is really nothing clever, or funny, about it.

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